



Cliffdale Primary Academy

Minutes of the Board of Governors Meeting

Date: Thursday 19 October 2017 Time: 5.00pm
Location: Cliffdale Primary Academy

Present:	Judith Smyth (Chair)	Co-opted Governor
	Will Atterbury (WA)	Co-opted Governor
	Sarah Clatworthy (SC)	Staff Governor
	Fran Cullen (FC)	Staff Governor
	Sherry-Ann Parsons (SP)	Parent Governor
	Alison Beane (AB)	Executive Headteacher

In Attendance:	Ashley Oliver-Catt (AOC)	Head of School
	Louise Isa-Grada (LG)	Assistant Headteacher
	Karen Frost (KF)	Clerk to Governors

1 **WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made. There were no apologies for absence.

2 **DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

2.1 There were no declarations of pecuniary interest relating to the agenda. Governors completed new declaration of interest forms for 2017/18.

3 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

3.1 Minutes from the meeting held on 12 May 2017 had been distributed in advance. They were agreed to be a true record and signed by the Chair.

4 **MATTERS ARISING**

4.1 There were no matters arising. A report on behaviour incidents had been included in the Head of School's report.

5 **HEAD OF SCHOOL REPORT**

5.1 A Head of School report dated 6 October 2017 had been distributed in advance of the meeting. Governors thanked the school for the new format which they found helpful.

5.2 The Head of School drew attention to key areas in the report:

5.3 The school's self-evaluation was that it remained an outstanding school.

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Date: 7 December 2017.....

- 5.4 The official APN was 104 but for a long time the unofficial APN had been 116. The school currently had 114 pupils on roll but this was likely to increase to 115 shortly. 64% of pupils in the school had autism and the number increased every year. The school had 15 new pupils in September, all of whom were boys and 7 of whom had autism.
- 5.5 Governors asked whether this posed any problems and whether the governing body should be concerned. The Head of School explained that the complexity of pupils' needs was increasing. Due to the number of complex pupils, the school would like to reduce the size of classes down to 8 however this would have financial implications for the school and wouldn't be possible until the new build was complete due to lack of space. Conversations had been held with the Local Authority about the issue although it was bigger than just Cliffdale as there was an issue with special school places in Portsmouth and nationally. Currently, 18 Year R children remained at Willows nursery due to a lack of school places.
- 5.6 Governors asked if the increased number of children requiring special school places was because of earlier diagnosis. The Executive Headteacher said it wasn't due to earlier diagnosis. The number of children with complex autism was growing.
- 5.7 The Head of School said the school had 84 boys, (74% of all pupils). 24% EAL, 53% Pupil Premium and 2 Looked after Children.
- 5.8 Governors received a staffing update and noted a number of staff were going on maternity leave. The middle leadership staff structure had been altered slightly. 2 TLRs had been recruited for Head of Lower School and Head of Upper School and there would be a senior TLR with longer term responsibility for autism due to the level of need in the school. Governors asked for a copy of the new staff structure.

Action: AB

- 5.9 Governors reviewed the 2016/17 strategic plan objectives. Governors asked what 'attention autism' was. The Head of School explained that it was an approach used to increase pupils' attention. The idea was to have fun, exciting, snappy and short activities that pupils sat and watched to catch their attention. It encouraged communication. A teacher had attended training on it last year and since then had trained other members of staff. The trainer would be returning to the Trust later in the year to provide some Trust wide training. Governors asked whether it developed pupils' attention. The Head of School said it did and that at its highest level it included joint working and joint sharing. Governors asked for a presentation at the next meeting.
- 5.10 Governors reviewed the level of attendance at the school which was at 96% and received a report on behaviour. In particular it was noted that there were 20 Level 3 incidents last year for 7 pupils. Governors said they thought the number of Level 3 incidents was very good for a school of this type. The Head of School said she believed the low level of incidents was due to the use of the bubbles ethos and the positive approach. Behaviour support plans were in place for any pupils involved in Level 3 incidents.
- 5.11 Learning walks had been carried out and showed that all new pupils and new staff were settled.
- 5.12 Governors were given copies of the 2016/17 staff handbook.
- 5.13 Governors drew attention to the end of year parent questionnaire results. Overall, they were extremely positive but slightly less positive for governor engagement/communication. Governors discussed this and agreed that the governing body would try and ensure that at

Signed:.....

Date: 7 December 2017.....

least one representative of the governing body attended all school events and parent coffee mornings.

Action: Send out dates of parent coffee mornings. AOC

5.14 Other suggestions included having a governor slot in the termly newsletter or producing a governor newsletter.

5.15 **Pupil Outcomes**

5.16 A Pupil Outcomes summary report – Sept 17 was received in advance of the meeting. The Assistant Headteacher drew attention to key areas in the report:

5.17 Overall, the report was really positive and demonstrated that pupils were making outstanding progress. The school used CASPA to benchmark their data against other schools.

5.18 All pupils that left in Year 6 made at least 2 levels of progress and many were exceeding expected levels of progress. Overall, pupils made exceptional progress whilst at the school.

5.19 The school set ambitious targets for all pupils and in the majority of areas over 90% of pupils achieved their targets. There was very little variation between groups which was really reassuring.

5.20 It was noted that the Pupil Premium report would be circulated to governors before being published on the website.

Action: AB/AOC

5.21 Governors noted the planned actions for 2017/18.

5.22 Governors asked how they could be sure the school was setting high enough targets for the pupils. The Assistant Headteacher said that CASPA was very useful. Staff knew the pupils very well and made professional judgments about suitable targets. These were then compared with the B-squared data and then the national picture in CASPA to make sure the pupils' progress was in line with children of like need. The school also did moderation with Mary Rose Academy, Redwood Park Academy and other special schools. The Assistant Headteacher said she was confident the target setting process was very robust.

5.23 Governors asked whether coaching conversations were taking place with teachers if needed. The Assistant Headteacher said that they did, for example, additional support had been provided for teachers who were not as confident with baselining.

5.24 The Executive Headteacher explained that the Heads of Schools have been working together to ensure consistent reporting across the Trust. The definition of excellent progress at Cliffdale had been increased to 90% in line with other schools in the Trust.

5.25 Governors asked how many schools and children the CASPA system covered and noted that it was thousands of children and hundreds of schools.

5.26 **Primary PE and Sports Premium**

5.27 It was noted that the Primary PE and Sports Premium report was available and would be sent to governors before being published on the website.

5.28 Governors said the funding had doubled this year and criteria for its spend would be available by the end of the month. This would include the requirement for pupils to do 60 minutes of activity a day. Governors asked whether this would pose a challenge for the

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Date: 7 December 2017.....

school. The Head of School said she thought pupils already did 60 minutes of activity, including break times every day, and so it shouldn't be an issue.

6 SEF

6.1 It was agreed to discuss the SEF at the next meeting. The SEF would be distributed to governors in advance of the meeting.

Action: AB/AOC

7 STRATEGIC PLAN 2017/18

7.1 Governors received a copy of the proposed Strategic Plan for 2017/18 at the meeting. The key focus areas were:

1a: Developing new leaders in the school.

1b: Implementing and evaluating the newly designed curriculum.

1c: Ensuring the increased Primary PE and Sport Premium.

2a: Further develop the culture of coaching.

2b: Ensuring that pupils make excellent progress.

3a: Ensuring all pupils have access to appropriate resources and approaches.

3b: Ensuring that pupils develop the resilience to manage change.

4a: Ensuring the new curriculum is broad and balanced and that outcomes for pupils continue to be excellent.

7.2 Governors approved the proposed plan asked that a full copy be sent out.

Action: AB/AOC

7.3 Governors asked what sensory integration was. The Head of School said it was a range of different physical and practical activities that was very personalised for each individual child. The Head of School recommended governors watch a recent documentary: Chris Packham – Asperger's and Me.

8 GOVERNING BODY MATTERS

8.1 Update on Solent Academies Trust

8.2 The Executive Headteacher provided an oral update about changes to the Solent Academies Trust board. The RSC was recommending more separation between the Members, Directors and Local Governing Bodies and so over time the Chair of Local Governing Bodies would no longer sit on the Board of Directors as well.

8.3 Governing Body Vacancies

8.4 It was noted that there were currently 2 vacancies for Parent Governors and 2 vacancies for Co-opted Governors.

8.5 Governors discussed the skills needed. It was noted that the governing body needed a breadth of experience and that a balance of gender, ethnicity and disability was important.

8.6 The Head of School said that one application had been received for the Parent Governor vacancies. The second vacancy would be advertised.

Action: AOC

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Date: 7 December 2017.....

8.7 Governors were in agreement to recommend to the Trust Board that Will Atterbury fill the vacancy for Vice Chair.

8.8 **Governor Training**

8.9 The Chair encouraged governors to attend any training sessions they were interested in as part of the SLA with Newport Educational. Governors were asked to provide feedback on any training they attended.

9 **Items for the Next Agenda**

- Governor monitoring
- Presentation about Attention Autism
- Follow up on governor engagement with parents – attendance at events, newsletter.
- SEF
- Update on governor vacancies

10 **AOB**

10.1 Governors congratulated AOC on having recently completed her NPQH.

11 **Date of the Next Meeting**

11.1 The date of the next meeting would be Thursday 7 December 2017 at 5.00pm.

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Date: 7 December 2017.....

Summary of Actions

Minute	Action	By whom	Target Date
1.	Distribute a copy of the staffing structure to governors.	AB	Dec 17
2.	Send out dates of parent coffee mornings.	AOC	Oct 17
3.	Send out the Pupil Premium report and Sports Premium report to governors.	AOC/AB	Nov 17
4.	Send out the SEF to governors.	AOC/AB	Nov 17
5.	Advertise the second parent governor vacancy.	AOC	Nov 17

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